

**From:** finortis  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 12/21/01 8:18am  
**Subject:** A few things about Microsoft, I do not like and think needs addressing

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**CC:** finortis

These are newer issues then was brought up in the US vs. Microsoft trial....but one's that absolutely show Microsoft's monopolist behaviour....and too much control they have gained over the consumer. Certain things that should be addressed, and also show that Microsoft has not "learned their lesson", but remains bad as ever, and perhaps worse/more bold then in the past:

1. Windows Product Activation: This has been bundled into Windows XP (the successor to Windows 2000, and their current latest operating system). With this system in place, the OS keeps track of peices of info about the hardware in the computer. Some of the things, an upgrade becomes necessary largely due to the bloat provided in software....of which Microsoft is a main culprit through the inclusion of useless features such as "Mr. Clippy" in Microsoft Office. Things such as RAM....people need more RAM because the software comes to utilize more RAM, as each generation progresses. Disk space, need we look at the disk space requirements of win3.1 and Dos 6.22 vs win95, win95 vs. win98, winNT 4.0 vs win2k, etc? CPU, same thing....it wasn't that long ago that a 400 MHz CPU was plenty fast....not with many software products on the market....that same CPU, the performance would tank.

Microsoft, with ever increasing amounts of bloatware has contributed to the need of consumers to upgrade their hardware, and despite this, they now restrict the users right to upgrade their own computers as they see fit. Under Windows Product Activation (or WPA), one is allowed to have 4 of those identifiers changed (a CPU upgrade changes too of them). After that, the operating system will cease to function, requiring re-activation. One is then at the mercy of Microsoft to allow them to reactivate, or have to re-purchase an operating system, they already payed for a liscence to use.

They will site software piracy as a reason for this....but they won't mention the flip side. How many times has a user, upgrading their computer from an OEM, been required to buy a bundled copy of Windows (many times the SAME EXACT VERSION the customer is liscenced too), due to Microsoft's OEM contracts? Ask many a Linux user how feasable it is to buy a "naked PC" (one without an operating system) and see what they say? They're refered to it as the Windows tax. One should not have to get a new liscence when one is replacing a PC, and not adding to it. The liscence in the past has stated that the user has a right to do a clean transfer of their Microsoft software from one computer to another. However, OEM contracts that Microsoft holds, has effectively prevented the user the right to do this. This WPA could further force the user to have to purchase an OEM copy of winXP, even if they own the upgrade, simply because they bought a new PC....even if they migrate their hard drive from the old to the new.

This is bunk, Windows Product Activation has got to go.

2. I am extremely opposed to the "Secure PC anitiative". Gettnng in bed with the RIAA, that has lobbied the DMCA through Congress, in which other elements of society were unwisely not listened too.....fair use rights which have been enjoyed by US citizens for decades are rashly being discarded. There is no balance sought here anymore....and take this entire mess, and throw in some people's ideas of brain

fingerprinting, the cost to civilization could be quite negative.....and the consequences to future generations quite bad. Brain fingerprinting, another one of these perposterious ideas that (in that case cropped up after Sept 11, supposedly to keep us safe, by allowing them to monitor brain responce, to figure out the inner workings of people's minds, and profile people's thoughts or what is in their brain)....is nothing short of an Orwellian nightmare. The possible applications of this:

<http://www.theregister.co.uk/content/archive/22020.html>  
<http://www.theregister.co.uk/content/archive/22123.html>

But in the case of the RIAA, which M\$ is getting in bed with, the DMCA (Digital Millenium Copyright Act), unwisely legislated under pressure from lobbyiest, without balancing this against other elements and interests of society, other then the recording industry, has even been used in case to stifle scientific progress. And what is this about scientific confrences migrating accross seas out of fear to publish work that is against the interests of a given corporation?

<http://www.eff.org/effector/HTML/effect14.37.html#I>

"This judge apparently believes that the fact that hundreds of scientists are currently afraid to publish their work and that scientific conferences are relocating overseas isn't a problem," noted Robin Gross, EFF Intellectual Property Attorney."

Allowing copyright law (the DMCA specifically, which seems at the urging of the RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) and others, to have largely thrown out fair use rights of previously legislated copyright law, to stifle scientific progress is most unwise, and could serve to hinder innovation, more then help it. So much of the technological progress we have seen in recent times, so many innovations, owe their existence to scientific discoveries which have been made over the last couple hundred years. Without the contributions science has offered to society, we might still be farming the backlands, and going to the bathroom in out houses. Without the discoveries of modern medicine, cures to many formerly dreaded diseases and ailments would not have been found. Without the discoveries of scientists, much of the technology now being discussed would not have even existed.

A hinderance of science, and the ability of scientists to publish their discoveries....because it is not in favor with a given corporation, could do more to hinder the progress of civilization, then any good that could ever come from it. Instead of welcoming discoveries of a flawed system, and learning from it, and learning how to make better systems (assuming the system imposed on customers is even a good idea, and that is quite an assumption), they have instead chosen to threaten legal action against researchers, if they should publish their work, which the motion picture industry does not like. Under conditions such as this, the objectivity in both findings and in the publication and sharing of findings, which the scientific method is very much dependent upon, is largely compromised. It little matters if it is corporate interest, or religious doctrine and persecution (Galileo anyone?) that stands as a hinderence to such

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objectivity being allowed in  
said findings and reporting of them.

This should come as no surprise in a court room type environment....where the search for the truth in any given case, should be of utmost importance. When the objectivity in fact finding is compromised, because it might be in disfavor of a given corporation (as much as a given religious authority of old)....the ability to arrive at the truth, and using such knowledge arrive at a wise decision is itself compromised.

Taking all of this, the Secure PC Initiative that Microsoft is behind, essentially amounts to nothing less than a declaration of war against the consumer.....and in the name of preserving the power of the recording industry (which society is largely progressing to the point of their obsolescence) is further eroding the freedoms that US citizens have enjoyed under law for decades. For information on the Secure PC Initiative, one can begin looking here:

<http://www.theregister.co.uk/content/4/23387.html>

This, and other initiatives such as CPRM, their "Digital Rights Management" and other such proposals, are totally unacceptable. Further the DMCA, and certain applications of it, such as in the case above, should be up for Constitutional Review, and put to the test against both prior articles of legislation and the US Constitution. Making such a law, without considering and balancing all the interests and parties of society is both unwise, and unwarranted. If endeavors such as this, and Microsoft's contribution to this aren't checked....the cost to civilization and the impact on society it makes, in years to come could be extremely negative.

3. Microsoft's .NET proposals should be reviewed. Much of what I have read, and it all being under Microsoft's control, leaves me extremely concerned. I would tend to be extremely cautious before rushing right into acceptance of .NET.

4. MSN (the Microsoft Network) could very well be an anti-trust violation waiting to happen. I just recently recieved an email from Qwest.net (my current provider) concerning a merger Qwest made with MSN. We are being encouraged to migrate to "MSN service powered by Qwest". Some of this information can be viewed on the qwest.net Internet site until January 3rd, when the site will be updated, per their announcement

<http://www.qwest.net/nav4/public/bus/crossroads.html>

Specific info on this merger is here:

<http://www.qwest.net/nav4/msn/faq.html>

Browsing around, I got info that states only Windows is supported. Umm....I dual boot between Linux and Windows....and as far as I'm concerned that is my right. When I signed up with qwest.net, I never agreed to run in a Windows only environment, and should not have to do so now. Such a provision is absolutely unacceptable, and I will not tolerate or agree too. I do not plan on migrating, but am looking into

alternative services now....since having further looked into MSN and gathered more information about this service from DSL Reports.

I then got indication that not only is Linux not totally supported, but that MSN prohibits one from using non-Microsoft email software. It is none of their business, and they have no right to tell me what software I can and can not use.....and to prohibit me from using an email program from a competitor to Microsoft. The suggested transition.....I come to like even less.

<http://www.dslreports.com/forum/remark,1775836~root=msnetwork~mode=flat>

"In addition, Microsoft also prohibits MSN users from using any third-party e-mail programs. Good Luck on Microsoft EVER supporting Sendmail :-D"

Further searching....I find even less to like about the ISP Qwest wants to switch us all over too....since certain corporate alliances were made between Qwest the phone company, and Microsoft (MSN specifically):

<http://www.dslreports.com/comments/1646>

In fact, I have yet to find one positive feedback from any of MSN's customers. All indication is that they're holding people against their will.....by holding them to the service and making it very difficult to leave once transitioned. Doing a further search around

<http://www.dslreports.com>

for info on MSN or this merger will find much of the same, from very dissatisfied customers. This whole MSN proposal has the earmarks of possible anti-trust violation associated with MSN (or anti-trust violations in the possible making).... In any case, as for me, I have NO intention of transitioning....but plan on changing my service before the current one runs out. The more I read about MSN.....the less I like the service, and do NOT want to get ensnared in this ISP from the get go. That they are taking over from my current ISP....I do NOT like, and very much loathe the prospects. I will even have my Qwest DSL service cancelled, and sign up with another provider such as Covad.....before I will switch to them, given all I have read about their service, on top of my initial hesitation, which has only been confirmed and expanded upon, the more research I do on them. I just hope that neither MSN or AOL expands into the customer base of any new ISP I go with, through such mergers.